

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01
INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 HA-05 IO-13
TRSE-00 SY-05 NSCE-00 SSO-00 ICAE-00 INRE-00 /087 W
-----008940 292108Z /73

O P 292000Z AUG 78
FM AMCONSUL SAO PAULO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8785
INFO AMEMBASSY BRASILIA PRIORITY
AMCONSUL RIO DE JANEIRO
AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES
AMEMBASSY LISBON

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PINT, SHUM, BR
SUBJ: FOLLOW-UP ON STUDENT DEMONSTRATIONS

REF: A. SAO PAULO 2557 B. SAO PAULO 2558

1. PEACEFUL SESSION AUGUST 28: THE STUDENT RALLY WHICH WAS ANNOUNCED FOR AUGUST 28 IN FRONT OF THE LAW FACULTY (REF A) WAS PROHIBITED BY POLICE. INSTEAD, SOME 3,000 STUDENTS AND OTHERS MET INSIDE THE BUILDING IN THE LAW FACULTY'S PATIO. THE DEMONSTRATION WAS ORGANIZED BY THE BRAZILIAN PRESS ASSOCIATION, THE JOURNALISTS UNION, THE COMMITTEE FOR AMNESTY, AND 15 STUDENT ASSOCIATIONS. THE SESSION WAS HELD WITHOUT INTERRUPTIONS AND DISPERSED PEACEFULLY. POLICE ANNOUNCED THAT SIX INDIVIDUALS WERE DETAINED AND RELEASED PRIOR TO THE RALLY.

2. PROVOCATEURS BLAMED FOR VIOLENCE AUGUST 27: THERE WAS WIDESPREAD PUBLIC COMMENT ON THE DISTURBANCES AT THE CATHEDRAL PLAZA FOLLOWING SUNDAY'S DEMONSTRATION BY THE MOVEMENT ON THE COST OF LIVING (REF A). AUXILIARY BISHOP MAURO MORELLI
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STATED THAT A SMALL GROUP OF RADICAL STUDENTS, WHO IGNORED HIS APPEALS AND THOSE OF THE SESSION'S ORGANIZERS, WERE RESPONSIBLE FOR PROVOKING THE POLICE FOLLOWING THE SESSION IN THE CATHEDRAL. BISHOP MORELLI PRAISED THE POLICE COMMANDER FOR ATTEMPTING TO AVOID A CONFRONTATION WITH TRAFIC CONSEQUENCES. THE BISHOP ALLEGED THAT THOSE ULTIMATELY RESPONSIBLE FOR THE EVENTS WERE THE AUTHORITIES, SPECIFICALLY THE MINISTER OF JUSTICE AND GOVERNOR

PAULO EGYDIO MARTINS. "THEY PROHIBITED MEETINGS IN THE PUBLIC PLAZA AND REFUSED TO HEAR THE VOICES OF THE PEOPLE, WHO ASK FOR THE CHANCE TO EXIST AND SURVIVE."

THE PRESIDENT OF COMMITTEE FOR JUSTICE AND PEACE, PROFESSOR DALMO DALLARI, SAID THE OCCURENCES OF AUGUST 27 WERE SIMILAR TO PREVIOUS INCIDENTS WHEN STUDENTS OF THE "LIBERTY AND STRUGGLE" (LIBERDADE E LUTA) MOVEMENT TURNED OTHER PEACEFUL DEMONSTRATIONS INTO CONFRONTATIONS WITH THE POLICE.

PRESIDENTIAL PRESS SPOKESMAN COLONEL RUBEN LUDWIG UNDERLINED THE GOVERNMENT'S INTENTION OF KEEPING DEMONSTRATIONS UNDER CONTROL. HE STATED THE POLICE HAD INTERVENED ONLY WHEN THE PARTICIPANTS BROUGHT THE DEMONSTRATIONS OUT OF THE CATHEDRAL AND INTO THE PLAZA. HE RESTATED THAT THERE IS A LAW GOVERNING PUBLIC DEMONSTRATIONS, AND LIKE IT OR NOT, THE LAW WOULD BE OBSERVED.

3. TIMING OF POLICE CRACKDOWN ON SOCIALIST CONVERGENCE: A DOEPS POLICE OFFICER TOLD A CONSULAR OFFICER THAT THE DETENTION OF THE LEADERS OF THE SOCIALIST CONVERGENCE (REF B) WAS TIMED TO APPREHEND THREE FOREIGN ORGANIZERS JUST PRIOR TO THEIR DEPARTURE FROM BRAZIL. THE DOEPS OFFICER STATED THAT THE ORGANIZERS HAD BEEN UNDER OBSERVATION EVER SINCE THEY ARRIVED IN BRAZIL SOME DAYS PREVIOUSLY. TWO ARGENTINES (HUGO MIGUEL BRESSATO AND RITA LUZIA ESTRASBERG) AND A PORTUGUESE (ANTONIO MARIA SA LEAL) WERE ARRESTED AUGUST 22 AT THE AIRPORT. ACCORDING TO POLICE, THE VISITORS WERE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE FINANCING OF AN ORGANIZING CONGRESS OF THE SOCIALIST CONVERGENCE WHICH WAS HELD IN SAO PAULO AUGUST 19-20.
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POLICE STATED THAT THERE WERE 1,020 PERSONS AT THE CONGRESS. ACTIVITIES OF THE SOCIALIST CONVERGENCE DURING THE FOLLOWING WEEK WERE ALLEGEDLY "TO SHOW THE VISITORS WHAT THEY WERE PAYING FOR". POLICE ALSO TOLD THE CONSULAR OFFICER THAT THE 16 REGISTERED OWNERS OF THE POLITICAL COMMENTARY MAGAZINE "VERSUS" WOULD HAVE THEIR FINANCIAL ASSETS FROZEN. THE MAGAZINE HAS BEEN CLOSELY IDENTIFIED WITH THE SOCIALIST CONVERGENCE. MEANWHILE, NINE OF THE 22 PERSONS IDENTIFIED WITH THE SOCIALIST CONVERGENCE WHO WERE ARRESTED AUGUST 22 HAVE BEEN RELEASED.
POVENMIRE

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: STUDENT DEMONSTRATIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 29 aug 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978SAOPA02576
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780353-0057
Format: TEL
From: SAO PAULO
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780813/aaaaakgi.tel
Line Count: 104
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: b8d7f759-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION ARA
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 78 SAO PAULO 2557
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 05 may 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: N/A
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 1589541
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: FOLLOW-UP ON STUDENT DEMONSTRATIONS
TAGS: PINT, SHUM, PINS, BR
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odhc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/b8d7f759-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014